

In The Claims

Amended claims are as follows:

1. (Currently amended) An etching agent for etching copper in an etching process ~~comprising-in~~ an aqueous solution containing consisting essentially of potassium hydrogen peroxomonosulfate and acetic acid, a concentration of said potassium hydrogen peroxomonosulfate falling within a range of 10.01% to about 23.31% by weight of the etching agent, said etching agent etching the copper at an approximately uniform rate throughout the etching process.

2. (Cancelled).

Claims 3-16 (Previously withdrawn)

17. (Previously presented) An etching agent according to claim 1, wherein said etching agent is capable of selectively etching the copper.

18. (New) An etching agent for etching copper in an etching process in an aqueous solution consisting essentially of potassium hydrogen peroxomonosulfate, a concentration of said potassium hydrogen peroxomonosulfate falling within a range of 10.01% to about 23.31% by weight of the etching agent, said etching agent etching the copper at an approximately uniform rate throughout the etching process.

19. (New) An etching agent according to claim 17, wherein said etching agent is capable of selectively etching the copper.